

# THE VASCULUM (SUBSTITUTE)

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*Edited by*

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## BY THE WAY

Secretaries of our Societies are requested to send us accounts of their various activities as soon as possible for inclusion in our next issue in July. Notes and records dealing with natural history topics may be sent in by readers at any time. They should be written in the usual form adopted in previous numbers of the *Vasculum* and only one side of the paper should be used. Failure to comply with these simple requirements can only end in disappointment to the sender, and causes a considerable waste of time when notes have to be recast.

### THE DURHAM COUNTY NATURALISTS' UNION.

In our last issue, in dealing with an old letter written by the late Mr. John Bidgood we referred to the Durham County Naturalists' Union. Recently, we discovered further facts concerning the Union and its work in 1907. On August 10th in that year, the Vale of Derwent Naturalists' Field Club met at Whitley Bay, when the Union was represented by Mr. W. H. Young, President of the Union. Mr. Young, at the request of the Field Club, gave an address on the Natural History of the Alnwick district. In concluding his remarks, he gave a clear and succinct account of the work of the Union, showing as he did so, the advantages derived from organised and systematic effort, and also expressing the hope that the influence of the Union would result in more cooperation and coordinated work amongst Durham Naturalists.

This note brings the history of the Union down to 1908, when Mr. Young was President. Can anyone supply us with information about its later doings and the circumstances which brought about its collapse?

### MRS. CATHERINE HODGKIN.

We feel sure that our readers will regret to learn of the death, on October 3rd, 1946, of our old friend Mrs. Hodgkin, of Old Ridley, Stocksfield. Mrs. Hodgkin was a keen field worker, and interested in all branches of natural history. She, therefore,

participated in the work of all our local organisations for she was a member of the Northern Naturalist's' Union, the Natural History Society of Northumberland and Durham, and of the Wallis Club. It is difficult to say which was her favourite branch of natural history, and perhaps it would be correct to reward her as equally interested in ornithology, entomology and her garden! Although she was handicapped in such a way as to prevent her regular attendance at field excursions, before the war she was to be seen at every Wallis Club meeting and was a regular exhibitor at the Club's conversaciones. On these occasions, she delighted us with her exquisite little paintings of birds, butterflies, and flowers. During the past six years her observations were restricted to the limits of her own garden; nevertheless, she continued to make noteworthy discoveries there, and to communicate them to her friends of like interests. It will be remembered that: she was one of the announcers of the detection of the Northern Brown Butterfly (*Erebia aethiops*) in Northeast Northumberland. The locality has never been rediscovered, and hence a task is set for the band of young and enthusiastic workers now arising amongst us. The insects taken in the new station were different from the old Durham forms and therefore worthy of special study.

#### ANOTHER PLEA.

On several previous occasions we have asked for help in connection with the preservation of our local flora and fauna. We venture once again to return to the subject. As everyone will realise, owing to the very hard and protracted winter we have had, our bird population has suffered grievous losses, some of the least expected species being affected most. May we appeal to all who have any influence in the matter to use it to prevent, as far as lies in their power, indiscriminate bird-nesting in the area? If this is done, recovery will be substantially expedited. Many of the national newspapers have made a similar appeal, and so has the Board of Agriculture.

Another disquieting feature which cries aloud for attention is the horrible increase everywhere in the wanton destruction of frogs, toads and newts. This season we met with an abominable example of this senseless slaughter. Whilst we were working along a pond edge, we encountered a group of youths, armed with specially sharpened steel rods, spearing frogs as they were mating or ovipositing, and dragging them out of the water. If the animal was then alive, it was despatched by the severing of the vertebral column. Remonstrance simply led to impudent replies and a return to the slaughter as soon as one departed. In view of the preparation of special instruments for the operation

it seems difficult to imagine that the parents of the youths concerned in the proceedings were ignorant of what was about to take place.

Is it not possible for teachers at school or members of our Societies to do something to check this ghastly enormity?

## THE SOCIETIES

### NORTHERN NATURALISTS' UNION.

By arrangements kindly made by Dr. Valentine, the Twenty-third Annual Meeting of the Union was held in the University Science Laboratories at Durham, on Saturday, March 1st. Considering the extraordinary weather, there was a very good attendance of members, although we lacked the presence of the usually enthusiastic Consett contingent.

The usual reports were read, that of the Treasurer, Mr. J. E. Ruxton being presented in his absence, whilst Dr. K. B. Blackburn, the Secretary read, and explained, her own. Information was also given concerning the position of the Vasculum. All of the reports were considered exceedingly satisfactory and the cordial thanks of the Union were tendered to those concerned.

The President gave the meeting a detailed statement of the proposed summer programme, and also pointed out that the Union was once more in a position to resume publication.

The election of officers followed when on the proposal of Mr. Dixon, seconded by Miss K. M. Chalkin, Dr. W. A. Clark was unanimously elected President to succeed Professor J. W. Heslop Harrison, whilst Mr. N. Britten was chosen as Assistant Secretary in place of Mrs. Robinson. From this we proceeded to the election of new members when once again satisfactory additions were made to our numbers, both of senior and junior members.

On the conclusion of the general business, the retiring President Professor Heslop-Harrison delivered an address entitled "Melanism in the Lepidoptera and its Evolutionary Importance". The lecturer pointed out that the phenomenon of melanism, which simply means the throwing down in organisms of an excess of black pigment, has often been confused with allied changes. Continuing, he demonstrated that its development was of great importance as there is apparently a close connection between its incidence and the industrialisation of a given area. Moreover, it reveals to us, without any possible doubt, an evolutionary movement taking place before our eyes. Next, the question of its inheritance and induction were discussed in detail, followed by a consideration of the part, if any, played by natural selection in its establishment. The lecture concluded

with an interesting account of the recent occurrence of melanism amongst lepidopterous larvae in this district. The whole was illustrated by a series of lantern slides of local interest.

At 4.30 p.m. we had a break for tea, which had been so kindly arranged for us by Dr. Valentine. When this was finished, as usual a *Conversazione* succeeded when matters of common interest were discussed, old friendships renewed and the exhibits examined. On this occasion we had several new exhibitors. Dr. Cragg interested us in his work in connection with the attacks of the blowfly on sheep whilst Mr. Crosby had on view a curious chlorophyll-free cowslip, Miss Lomas produced a series of new foxglove hybrids involving various Continental, especially Portuguese, species and our own common foxglove. She had also a series of charts illustrating the inheritance of the forms concerned. An exhibit, arranged by the Geological Department of the Durham Colleges, included fossil shells from the Northumberland and Durham Coal Measures, and a series of minerals from Boltsbum Flats and other districts in Durham. As is usual, Mr. T. K. Morton had some of his insects to interest us. These comprised on this occasion a series of swallowtail butterflies bred from larvae collected by himself. Dr. Valentine showed us a number of pressed plants to illustrate his recent *Vasculum* note on rushes from Butterby, as well as copies of early British Floras.

#### DARLINGTON AND TEESDALE NATURALISTS' FIELD CLUB.

During the Autumn Session, we have had some interesting lectures on such varied topics as "The Flight of Animals" (Mr. Bentley-Beetham); "Round about Ryedale" (Mr. S. Allenby); "The Daily Life of a Shetland Crofter" (Mr. Gordon Wood); "A Holiday in Donegal" (Miss E. M. Clegg), "Bog Mosses of Durham County" (Mr. G. F. Horsley); "Nature's Remedies" (Dr. James Watson); and "Plant Ecology" (Miss M. Andrews). A general discussion on "Science and the Future" opened by Dr. Watson, also aroused keen interest.

Two evenings were devoted to a review of our phenological observations for the year, based on some 400 records received from 46 members. These illustrated, for example, the successive effects on flowering of the mild weather of early February, the colder conditions of late February and most of March, and the unusual warmth of the last week of March and the first half of April. The promise of the farm crops and the disappointment of harvest were reviewed, as were the responses of bird and insect life to the prevailing conditions.

A Book Night was held at which members were invited to nominate books for purchase for the Club Library out of funds subscribed for the purpose. 25 nominations were received and

voting went in favour of the following: "The British Islands and their Vegetation", "Britain's Structure and Scenery", "A Dictionary of British Wayside Trees", "A Beast Book for the Pocket", "The Otter Book", and "A Naturalist on Lindisfarne". Six other books were presented after the meeting, which revealed the deep interest taken by members in Natural History literature.

#### ANNFIELD PLAIN AND STANLEY NATURALISTS' CLUB.

The Fourth Annual Meeting of the Club was held in the Public Library, Annfield Plain, when the Secretary, Mrs. F. Wade, again reported a successful year. The membership now stands at 97 adults and 6 juniors, a decrease of three.

The Treasurer, Mr. J. Atkinson, announced that the Club had now a balance in hand of £21 19 6. The election of officers resulted in the choice of Dr. W. M. Morison as President, and the re-election of the old representatives in other positions.

The Secretary, in discussing the year's working, stated that there had been ten rambles and sixteen lectures, seven of the latter having been given by our own members. The average attendance at the field meetings was 38 and at the lectures 58, a very satisfactory position.

For our first summer outing we went to Juniper Valley, with Mr. J. J. Robson as guide. We first visited Smiddy Shaw Reservoir; thence we proceeded via Hisehope Valley to Gold Hill. The latter is a very apt name, for the hillsides were ablaze with masses of whin bloom and primroses. Mr. Robson pointed out to us an adder he had killed. Throughout our journey, we were struck by the abundance of a woolly aphid on the conifers. On June 1st, we went to Pan Shields, Heugh Wood and Ebchester under the leadership of Mr. Guy; this outing, like that under Mr. J. J. McKinney at Crookhall, Iveston and Brooms Dene, on July 27th, was spoilt by rain. On June 29th, we visited Blanchland and Hunstantonworth, with the Rev. W. Weckenden as leader; this also ended in rain, but we were hospitably entertained to tea by Miss Robson at the Old Rectory at Hunstantonworth. August 10th, saw us at Ruffside Hall and Winnow's Hill, Mr. Dixon being the guide. At the former point, we were cordially received by Mrs. Clifton Brown, the Speaker's wife. Leaving the Hall we visited Winnow's Hill where Mr. Dixon told us the history of this old Quaker burial ground. Our visit to Southhill Hall and Finchdale Priory took place on August 24th, when Mr. F. Wade described the Abbey ruins and related the story of St. Godeeric. Mr. H. L. Honeyman acted as leader when we examined Bessie Surtees' House, The Close and All Saints' Church, on September 7th. Our programme closed on September 21st with

a joint meeting with the Weardale Field Club at Frosterley where we visited the Harehope Quarry and Bollihope Burn. Mr. A. S. Davison very kindly pointed out the interesting features at both places and described the fossils seen.

Our lectures were as follows:- Across the Pennines (Mr. F. Wade); Earthquakes and Volcanoes (Mr. A. S. Davison); Scenes in many Counties (Mr. J. W. Simpson); Impressions of Central Europe (Canon F. S. Myers); Our Greatest Mineral (Mr. J. J. McKinney); The Tyne Valley (Mr. J. Finney); Problem of Palestine (Mr. C. A. Holmes); A Holiday in the Orkneys and Shetlands (Mr. J. J. Robson); Witherite, a Rare Mineral (Mr. J. Pigg); Biology (Mr. V. Bell); Old Newcastle (Mr. C. J. Young); Oil and Oilfields (Prof. Hickling); Trees and Man (Mr. A. E. Hart); The Northumberland Coast (Mr. J. Finney); Bygone Durham (Dr. G. W. Gibby); A Holiday in the Highlands (Mr. F. A. Wills).

If possible the Club proposed to form a camera section to enable it to build up a pictorial survey of the district.

## NOTES AND RECORDS

### NOTES

**An Island Flora at Gainford.**—A list of 136 species of vascular plants has been recorded on a small island in the Tees at Gainford by Miss G. J. Lonsdale, of the Darlington and Teesdale Naturalists' Field Club, in a series of visits during the last two seasons. The island is one which has been built up of river shingle in comparatively recent years. Among the less common plants found by Miss Lonsdale are Globe Flower (*Trollius europaeus*), Large-flowered Bittercress (*Cardamine amara*), Wood Stitchwort (*Stellaria nemorum*, Yellow Loosestrife (*Lysimachia vulgaris*), Moneywort (*L. nummularia*), Water pepper (*Polygonum hydropiper*) and Yellow Star-of-Bethlehem (*Gagea lutea*).—J.B.N.

**Psyllids in Spring.**—This season in order to clear up certain obscure points in the life histories of some of our local Psyllids, I commenced beating and sweeping soon after the snow had disappeared. Insects appeared very scarce although that may rather point to their dispersal from their shelter plants by the bad weather. However, I did manage to get females of the rare *Triosa munda* Forst. near Corbridge. The Aphalaras, in particular, were difficult to secure. After repeated searches in its known localities, without any success, in the end I beat a fair number of females of *Aphalara exilis* W. & M. from conifers near Kielder. These proved to be of a very peculiar pale type and well worth study. In early April, similarly, I found it impossible to discover the early stage, overwintering larva of *Aphalara nervosa* Forst. at yarrow roots or that of *A. pilosa* Osh. on *Artemisia absinthium*, these seem to have been wiped out more or less completely. Members of the genus *Psylla*, usually sheltering on conifers, were present in fair numbers.—George Heslop Harrison.

**The Bog Orchis (*Malaxis paludosa*) in our Counties.**—This tiny orchid, always quite rare, has been regarded as a decreasing species with us. In fact, only one locality, in Northumberland, has produced it of recent years. Recently, in looking through a copy of Vol. 1., Part 1., of the Transactions of the Vale of Derwent Naturalists' Field Club (New Series), I came across a paper entitled "Our Local Orchids" by Mr. Richard Adamson, in which he makes the following remarks about *Malaxis paludosa*: "It is now and again found in the upper reaches of the Derwent in very marshy situations where moss grows plentifully, and forms spongy masses. It blooms towards autumn. Time and diligence are required in searching for it, and even with these conditions its presence may easily be overlooked, owing to its small and inconspicuous growth". As Mr. Adamson was an exceptionally reliable botanist, and the localities to which he refers are entirely unknown to any of us, it seems a suitable task for some of the best placed societies to undertake the rediscovery of the stations obviously accessible to the Vale of Derwent Club forty years ago.—J.W.H.H.

**New Crosses in the Primulas of the Vernales Group.**—A year or two ago, I managed to introduce the violet coloured *Primula amoena* into crosses involving *P. elatior* and *P. juliae*. In view of the delicate ruby colour of the flowers of the latter species, I imagined that I might secure flowers of some new and pleasing shade in the crosses in which it was concerned. Instead, the flowers of the first cross were of a ruby hue much less pleasing than those of many *P. juliae* strains.

The cross between *P. elatior* and *P. amoena* was even less pleasing than the preceding. Except for one plant, raised from my seeds by Mr. R. B. Cooke, the offspring were of two types, one with more or less diluted *P. amoena* coloration and the other of yellowish tints, approximating the colour of *P. elatior*. Clearly, as in the crosses between *P. juliae* and *P. elatior*, the latter species introduces a factor inhibiting colour.—J.W.H.H.

**The Past Winter.**—To many of our readers the past winter will have come as a surprise. However, the winter of 1894-1895 was much the same except that then the frost was harder and the snowfall lighter. Its influence on birdlife is already apparent, but its full effects in other directions cannot yet be estimated. If one's former experiences may be used as a guide, there is a great possibility that some insects, especially lepidoptera, will show an increase in numbers, due to the scarcity of birds. Thus our woods may show defoliation in early summer. As far as plants are concerned, the usually spring catkin bearing plants were very late, with the willow showing no expanded florets even in mid-April. On the other hand, the Blue Grass, *Sesleria caerulea*, was in flower soon after the snow vanished, and even anticipated the flowering of the Lesser Celandine.

Of the usual Spring emerging moths, in spite of search, only one was seen; this was the Dotted Border which was noted on the extraordinary date of April 1st.—J.W.H.H.

**The Redwing in Newcastle.**—This winter immigrant is certainly not one that can be expected in Newcastle. Nevertheless, several reports of its occurrence in the Jesmond area were handed to me. Moreover, when the snow was at its very worst, I observed a single specimen in front of the Department of Agriculture, King's College. Someone had very considerably placed some oats for it to eat. Although, I watched it for some time, it simply hopped about disconsolately, making no effort to take the food provided.—J.W.H.H.

RECORDS.

ODONATA—DRAGONFLIES

<b>Aeshna juncea</b> L.	66
Normally this large dragonfly can only be described as rare with us. During the present season, however, it has been plentiful, occurring near every reasonable patch of water.	
<b>Sympetrum striolatum</b> Charp.	66
Also very commonly encountered in September, 1946, in the Team Valley.	
<b>Cordulegaster boltonii</b> Don.	66
Only odd examples noted in the same area.—J.W.H.H.	

LEPIDOPTERA —BUTTERFLIES AND MOTHS.

<b>Vanessa cardui</b> L. Painted Lady.	66
One seen at Blackhall Rocks, 6/7/46.—J. K. Morton.	
<b>Abraxas sylvata</b> Scop. Clouded Magpie.	66
Very common in 1946. Larvae beaten at Finchale Abbey and Urpeth; imagines on Waldrige Fell and within the Sunderland Borough boundary in Silksworth Lane.—J.K.M.	
<b>Oporinia dilutata</b> Bkh. November Moth.	66
Very scarce generally, but, on the other hand, <i>regressa</i> forms were plentiful in one wood near Birtley. Quarrington Hill larvae from birch produced small dullish, forms. Somewhat unexpectedly, the pale, typical form persists in one of the Urpeth Woods.—J.W.H.H.	
<b>Oporinia autumnata</b> Bkh.	66
The wood to which reference has just been made produced very remarkable forms of this species approximating var <i>similis</i> . They await further study from the genetical standpoint.—J.W.H.H.	
<b>Vanessa cardui</b> L.	66
Noted in the North Tyne Valley on April 11th with a single <i>Aglais urticae</i> .—G.H.H.	

COLEOPTERA—BEETLES.

<b>Chrysomela varians</b> Scholl.	66
Very common on <i>Hypericum perforatum</i> by the Tees at Middleton-in-Teesdale on 29/7/43.—J. K. Morton.	
<b>C. orichalcea</b> Mull.	66
On flowers of <i>Centaurea nigra</i> and in rotting clover hay at Finchale Abbey, 19/9/46.—J.K.M.	
<b>Sermyla halensis</b> L.	67
Very common on ladies' bedstraw on the sand dunes at Seaton Sluice in September, 1946.—J.K.M.	
<b>Aphthoma herbigrada</b> Curt.	66
Abundant on rock rose on Strawberry Hill, Thornley, on 23/9/44.—J.K.M.	
<b>Coccinella hieroglyphica</b> L.	66
Common on heather in the Cornsay area in September, 1946. About 50 of the specimens were of the form with completely black elytra; no intermediates were taken.—J.K.M.	



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**BY THE WAY**

Once again, we request the Secretaries of our Societies to send us punctually accounts of their doings. Only by utilising material so provided can the Union bring its members into that close contact which was declared to be one of its major aims when it was founded. In addition, the information supplied will assist the Union to maintain a measure of coordination in respect to current work within its area. Readers are invited to contribute notes and records dealing with natural history subjects, and written in the usual form on one side of the paper at any time.

**KINGS COLLEGE NATURALISTS' SOCIETY**

We have just received a copy of an attractive publication issued under the title "The Naturalists' society Magazine" by the above named society, and edited by Mr. Peter C. Jowsey. As is to be expected, it is chiefly concerned with the doings of King's College Naturalists. In particular, it supplies an interesting account of the Society's Expedition to the Isle of Arran during the period April 8<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup>, 1947, in which no fewer than 32 members participated. Further, the Secretary, Mr. Dennis Morgan, contributes detailed accounts of the Indoor and Outdoor Meetings held by the Society during the period March to June, 1947. Included also, as a kind of supplement, is a general report from the pen of Miss D. E. Hammond dealing with the fauna and flora of Robin Hood's Bay as observed when the K.C.N.S. Expedition visited that area in July, 1946.

Of the other articles, we should single out for special mention is that by Mr. F. C. Grey which concerns itself with the natural history of an old brick pond. It contains much information clearly and brightly written in such a way as to appeal to all of those who are not ashamed to label themselves "Field Naturalists". A number of book reviews completes the issue.

Perhaps a little helpful criticism will not be taken amiss. Whilst the general "get up" of the magazine is quite pleasing, we should

like to point out that the accepted usage in respect to Latin specific names has not been adopted in the report of the Robin Hood's Bay work, and occasionally elsewhere. With very few exceptions in the former paper, these appear with capital letters; small letters, except in the case of certain botanical names, should have been employed. Again, there seems to be an appreciable number of "misprints" which could have been avoided, whilst we confess to an intense curiosity concerning the strange "Fr." placed in two or three cases before typically British personal names!

#### THE PRESERVATION OF OUR LOCAL FLORA AND FAUNA

On several occasions in the past, we have pleaded for a concerted effort to put an end to vandalism of various types in our area. Now we approach a subject of vital interest to all concerned with the natural history of Northumberland and Durham; that subject is the reckless over-collecting of rare and other plants and animals. The prevention of such acts should surely form one of the main objects of our societies, and they could easily give much valuable aid in the matter.

Quite recently, we received information concerning the removal of a car load of the Bird's-eye Primrose from Upper Teesdale, and of the offering of bunches of the Spring Gentian, gathered in wild Teesdale stations, for sale. Moreover, expeditions, deliberately organized from outside of our counties to collect a series of complete collections of Teesdale rarities, such as have haunted the district recently, should be firmly discouraged, and, if possible, suppressed. No species, however abundant, can withstand such attacks as these.

So far as local societies are concerned, it is but fair to state that in the main, they fully realize their responsibilities, and do their very best in impressing upon their members the desirability in exercising restraint in dealing with rarities. Nevertheless, even the N.N.U. Field Meetings are not free from the evils of over-collecting. In the case of the Brasside outing, a newly-formed colony of Six-spot Burnets was discovered. Despite requests that it should be left untouched to establish itself, the insects were massacred on a wholesale scale. In one instance, a tube crammed full of writhing corpses was observed. What purpose such a mass of wrecked specimens could serve one cannot conceive. It is sincerely to be hoped that our members will help the Union in its efforts to preserve for others the beauties we have enjoyed ourselves.

#### BUTTERFLY AND MOTH IMMIGRANTS

During the month of June, there was a considerable influx of migrating Lepidoptera. Of these, we have observed ourselves, or have had reported to us, several species including the Painted Lady, the Red Admiral, the Clouded Yellow, the Large White, the Hummingbird Hawk and the Silver Y. In view of the interest taken

in such wanderers, and the scientific value of a complete record, we should be glad to receive notes concerning such insects from our readers. In addition, any information concerning the occurrence of the Peacock butterfly in our area would be welcome. It will be remembered that this fine insect has indicated the possibility of its establishing itself with us during recent years; nevertheless, although it has been observed every year for a long period, very few records of its presence have been received.

## THE SOCIETIES

### NORTHERN NATURALISTS' UNION

By the kind permission of the Earl of Scarborough, we commenced our summer programme by visiting the woods around Lumley Castle on May 13th. The party met on the New Bridge over the Wear, and approached the Castle from the north along the banks of the river. Owing to the hard winter and late spring, we failed to see many of the expected forms. Particularly disappointing were the insects, for of lepidoptera we saw only larvae of the Spring Usher, the Green Brindled Crescent and the Twinspot Carpet; even the usual winter moths had not yet hatched whilst queens of the commoner bumblebees and a few solitary bees of the genus *Andrena* served to remind us of the possibilities of the area. Late as the flowering plants were, we managed to find an abundance of the usual spring flowers like primroses, bluebells, garlic, wood sanicle, arum, wood anemones, violets, moschatel, dog's mercury, wood forget-me-not and the like. Parasitic upon elms in many stations, we observed the strange toothwort in abundance. As local naturalists know, the only station for the yellow deadnettle in our counties exists in these woods; it proved to be in a very flourishing condition. With it, and in many other habitats, we noted the wild daffodil, which when compared with specimens from its well-known colonies in Farndale, Cleveland, proved to be identical with them. In addition to these, our President, Dr. W. A. Clark, was so fortunate as to discover a new locality in v.c. 66 for the wood barley *Hordeum sylvaticum*, this has not been reported from Durham for many years. In spite of the general lateness, the rhododendrons made a fine display, and their brilliant blossoms were well patronized by the queen Bombi. We had our meal on the grassy slope at the head of the dene, after which we made our homeward journey via Chester-le-Street.

The second field meeting was held at Dryderdale on June 7th, by the kind invitation of Mr. J. E. Hodgkin. Utilizing three buses and some private transport, over 100 members attended.

Those who arrived in the morning had a pleasant walk through the grounds of St. John's before coming to the Dryderdale estate. Later, all explored the woods and hillsides near the house, and after tea, the Darlington group visited the "Castles", an ancient earthwork

not far away. In the St. John's grounds we noticed Mountain Pine with an extraordinary number of year old cones, even up to six on a single shoot. Amongst the planted trees in the Dryderdale woods our attention was directed to some large Hemlock (Tsuga) trees from which seeds were being collected for planting. Of native plants, those proper to marshy habitats were especially observed. Lady's Smock was discovered with normal and with double flowers; near by we found the Marsh Violet, beautifully fructifying *Mnium hornum* and the gay little fungus *Mitryla phalloides* in plenty. Boggy patches also yielded Cranberry and Sundew.

The ornithologists were fortunate in seeing the pied flycatcher and its nest, a curlew's nest with four eggs and the whinchat and stonechat.

Insects noted included the fine dragon fly *Cordulegaster boltonii*, and amongst the moths, the Latticed Heath, the White Wave, the Brimstone and the Bordered White.

For tea so kindly provided on the terrace, we have to thank Mr: and Mrs. Hodgkin.

The third meeting was held at Brasside on July 12th. The day was fine, but the attendance was spoiled by the bus strike. The ponds were at their best, and local perch fishers were making the best of their opportunities. Again, however, dredging there gave but little return although, in addition to our takes in 1943, we did find the pond weed *Potamogeton millardi*. We collected the same roses as before but proved, to our complete satisfaction, that the orchid then taken in an almost uniform stand was a hybrid between *Orchis fuchsii* and *O. purpurella*. In spite of the report that the Royal Fern had been destroyed by fire, we were very pleased to find it in very fine condition. Amongst the insects we noted a newcomer in the form of the Six-spot Burnet which seems everywhere to be extending its range with us. Accompanying it were swarms of Meadow Browns, Small Heaths, Common Blues and Latticed Heaths.

#### DARLINGTON AND TEESDALE NATURALISTS' FIELD CLUB

The Annual Conversazione on January 25th, was well attended and was chiefly notable for an address on "Experimental Evolution" by Prof. J. W. Heslop Harrison, who referred particularly to the occurrence and spread of melanism in moths in the industrial areas of the north east.

"Some Geological Observations in Teesdale" was the title of Miss M. S. Carmichael's stimulating account of some puzzling features in the scenery of the dale, which could be explained in terms of geological faults, Ice Age phenomena, or the period of uplift which followed the Ice Ages.

In a valuable address on "Recent Changes in the Yorkshire Flora" Miss C. M. Rob described the effects of drainage and land

improvement on the native flora of the North Riding. Marsh plants, in particular, had suffered as their habitats were becoming progressively drier. On the other hand, she gave some striking examples of the spread of alien plants and she suggested scope for further, research .in detecting new hybrids.

Other lectures given during the Spring Session have been:- "A Peep through the Microscope" (Mr. A. D. Thompson); "The National Trust" (Mr. S. Cardwell); "The N.W. Coast of Scotland" (Mr. L. W. Pennock); "Some Wasp Data" (Mr. H. M. Collier); "Bird Notes from Yarmouth" (Alan Baldrige); "Birds of the Farnes" (Mr. A. Stainthorpe); "Cornish Holiday" (Mr. G. H. Burden); "The Scientist and Nature" (Mr. R. Wood); "Keeping the Weather out" (Mr. H. Sowerby) and "Local Geology" (Mr. C. Walker).

The late advent of Spring was celebrated on April 19th, by a popular excursion, under Mr. T. N. Scaling, to Farndale, to see the sheets of Daffodils which line the banks of the Dove.

At the Annual Meeting on April 29th, reports were given on a successful year's work. 70 indoor and field meetings had been held with an average attendance of 43. "Nature Notes" had been contributed at the weekly meetings by an increasing number of members, with juniors now taking a valuable part. Mr. H. Sowerby was cordially thanked for his services as President and Miss N. B. Glendinning was elected to this office for the ensuing year.

## NOTES AND RECORDS

### NOTES.

**A Peculiar Primrose.**—The hybrid between the primrose and cowslip is rather frequent in Northumberland and is usually recognisable by its intermediate character although it normally shows a cowslip umbel. This year, near Chesterholm (v.c. 67), I found a plant, which was presumably a segregate from this hybrid, which bore a large number of cowslip-like flowers on the ends of long primrose stalks, with no visible umbel.—K.B.B.

**The Termination of Hibernation of the Psyllid, *Livia juncorum*.**—On May 10th I visited Blanchland and was very pleased to discover this curious insect just leaving its winter stations and already egg-laying.—G.H.H.

***Brefeldia maxima* near Black Callerton Northumberland.**—In the beginning of November, 1944, I noticed a large, creamy white plasmodium on the stump of a tree in the above district. It covered an area of about 1 sq. ft. to a depth of  $\frac{1}{2}$ " and was about 3' above ground level on the side of the stump leeward to the prevailing wind. This position may possibly be correlated with the preference of plasmodia for dry positions when they are about to fruit. Smaller plasmodia had climbed up grass stems and a fencing post near the base of the stump.

When first seen, the outer part of the plasmodium resembled a homogeneous, creamy paste which in the course of a few days became heaped up into innumerable sporangia, the colour gradually deepening through a series of browns and purplish browns to nearly black. It was almost impossible to see the microscopic structure of the sporangia when they were mature, since the fertile layer seemed to consist entirely of a mass of minutely spinulose spores: even the threads of the capillitium were difficult to detect. In a younger condition, however, it was possible to find columellae from the sporangia and the threads of the capillitium

with the many chambered vesicles at their centres. About four of the larger, central chambers of the fusiform vesicle each contained a single spore, while the smaller tapering cells by which the vesicle was joined at each end to the thread were sterile: the total length of a single thread with its central vesicle averaged 0.25mm.

Beneath the fertile layer the barren basal tissue was, to begin with, almost translucent and of a much more tough and gelatinous texture than suggested by Lister's description "spongy"; otherwise, the details complied with her characterisation of *Brefeldia maxima*.

I looked for specimens in the same area in 1945 without success: it would be interesting to know whether any other reader has recorded this Myxomycete.—G. A. D. Jackson.

**Seasonal Peculiarities.**—It is not usual for almond trees to ripen fruit in the north. Last year, however, most of our local trees set fruit although in many cases the seeds were poorly developed, and the fruits remained on the trees until winter. Judging from the innumerable seedlings now to be seen, last season must have been very favourable for beech.—K.B.B.

**A Speedy Colonization of a Campion Patch by Campion-feeding Moths.**—Last year I planted a great number of campions in the garden in connection with my genetical work. Amongst them was an unknown Bulgarian species which I hope to study during the coming winter. None of these flowered last season except some crosses between the red and the white campion and the Bulgarian form. On June 4th, I was astounded to find a female of the Sandy Carpet Moth (*Perizoma flavofasciata*) ovipositing on my plants; the nearest point at which I have ever seen this insect is nearly three miles away. Further, on July 15th, I observed a second example in the garden. Now, the pods of all the forms, including the Bulgarian, are swarming with larvae of the Lychnis Moth (*Hadena bicurvis*), that species also must have travelled over three miles of difficult (for it!) country from its nearest colony in the Birtley district.—J.W.H.H.

**A Curious Red Campion from Budle Bay.**—Toward the end of May, when we were looking for Psyllids, we went to Budle Bay to beat the Sea Buckthorn there. On the sea banks I watched a colony of red campions amongst which grew a female plant with its sepals represented by huge foliaceous organs such as often occur in various species of wild rose.—J.W.H.H.

**The Recurrence of the Five-spot Burnet Moth, *Zygaena lonicerae* Esp, in Durham.**—Nearly a hundred years ago, the late Mr. John Hancock, as recorded by Wailes in his "List", captured the Five-spot Burnet, *Zygaena trifolii*, in Gibbside Park. These specimens, when critically examined by Mr. J. E. Robson, proved to have been incorrectly named and to appertain, to the present species. Curiously enough, the species seemed to have vanished in the fifties of the last century, for no one, until this year has ever taken it in our counties since the publication of Wailes' "List". However, on July 17th, when I was examining the ground near Birtley on which I discovered the Six Spot Burnet last season, I was astounded to find that, whilst the Six Spot Burnet was common enough, so was the Five Spot! I took four specimens, including a pair *in cop.*, and examined them at home and was delighted to discover that they belonged to the species, *Z. lonicerae*. I liberated two of my specimens the next day where I had taken them. The other two, the pair, were retained for breeding purposes, and from them I have now a batch of healthy larvae feeding on clover. In this, the new Birtley station, the species is clearly attached to the vetch, *Vicia cracca*, and not to the Birds' Foot Trefoil. In addition to the two pure species, I captured a female, obviously a hybrid between *Z. filipendulae* and *Z. lonicerae*, which has laid a batch of infertile eggs.—J.W.H.H.

## RECORDS

### FLOWERING PLANTS

<b>Potentilla procumbens</b> Sibth. Tormentil.	102
On record for the Isle of Islay but apparently not from Colonsay but collected there in 1940.—J. Heslop Harrison.	
<b>Antennaria margaritacea</b> Br. Pearly Everlasting.	66
A large clump on the bank of the Tees below Gainford.—Miss G. J. Lonsdale.	
<b>Anthemis tinctoria</b> L. Yellow Chamomile.	66
By the roadside near Heighington.—Miss D. M. Clough.	
<b>Draba incana</b> L.	65
Very fine on a ledge on Mickle Fell out of reach of the sheep. Some plants were over 2 ft high. Nearby, on the sheep cropped turf, the plants were only 2 inches high.—J. K. Morion.	
<b>Parietaria ramiflora</b> L. Wall Pellitory.	66
On the cliffs below Finchdale Abbey.—J.K.M.	
<b>Petasites albus</b> Gaertn.	66
A patch by the Lanchester road above Wolsingham.—J.K.M.	
<b>Sisymbrium orientale</b> L.	66
This alien has been well established for a few years now on waste ground in the Holmside-Burnhope area.—J.K.M.	
<b>Polygonatum multiflorum</b> Moench.	66
A few clumps on the Magnesian Limestone outcrop above the Silksworth to Ryhope colliery railway. Presumably a relic of cultivation.—J.K.M.	
<b>Hippuris vulgaris</b> L. Mare's Tail.	66
In a small pond to the west of North Hylton.—J.K.M.	
<b>Potentilla palustris</b> Scop. Marsh Cinquefoil.	66
On Sharpley Moss near Sunderland.—J.K.M.	
<b>Sedum telephium</b> L.	67
A few plants in the bed of the Derwent below the Sneap.—J.K.M.	
<b>Helleborus foetidus</b> L. Fetid Hellebore.	66
Miss G. J. Lonsdale reports that the colony on the Tees cliffs at Whorlton has suffered from landslides this winter.	
<b>Ribes pubescens</b> Hartm. Downy Red Currant.	66
By the Tees above Low Coniscliffe.—J. B. Nicholson.	
<b>Acorus calamus</b> L. Sweet Flag.	67
Observed last autumn in full flower in a pond near Netherwitton.—K.B.B.	
<b>Daphne laureola</b> L. Spurge Laurel.	67
In woods along the Wansbeck near Morpeth.—Derek Robertson.	
<b>Anchusa italica</b> L.	66
Growing on a pit heap near Durham and flowering well; no doubt, a garden escape.—A. Todd.	
<b>Malva moschata</b> L. Musk Mallow.	66, 67
Near Barnard Castle in a white flowered form.—G. M. Railton.	
Near Dipton.—J. Temperley.	
<b>Gagea lutea</b> L. Star of Bethlehem.	66
Also found at Barnard Castle.—G. M. Railton.	
<b>Neottia nidus-avis</b> L. Bird's Nest Orchids.	66
Taken at Muggleswick.—Vera Pickering.	
<b>Potamogeton alpinus</b> Balb.	66
This pondweed, so rare and local in Durham, was noted in very shallow water in the Wheysike Beck in Upper Teesdale.—J.W.H.H.	
<b>Veronica anagallis-aquatica</b> L.	103

- V. aquatica** Berak. 103  
Both of these plants were found in some quantity on a sandy stream flowing from the loch near the Machair Mhor on the Isle of Coll; the latter provides a new county record for v.c. 103.—John Heslop Harrison
- Saxifraga aizoides** L. Yellow Saxifrage. 110  
A very noteworthy and unexpected addition to the flora of the Outer Hebrides; discovered on the Isle of Barra, with other alpine, between the two mountains Heaval and Hartaval.—John Heslop Harrison
- Pyrola rotundifolia** L. Wintergreen. 66, 68  
After a lapse of 31 years I revisited Newham Bog and discovered that, whilst some things had suffered from an invasion of nettles and stacks of derelict barbed wire, most of the old specialities were in a very flourishing condition. In particular, the Round-leaved Wintergreen occurred abundantly amongst the small willow bushes. At the Black Hall Rocks, in Durham, which I had not visited for nearly a dozen years, I took the opportunity of examining its old habitat in which it was in danger of extermination from noxious fumes. It proved to have survived and was even extending its range. Many plants were in flower and in seed. In neither station now does the plant seem to be in any danger.—John Heslop Harrison
- Primula farinosa** L. Bird's Eye Primrose. 66  
Although the coast stations for this lovely little plant are some distance from the Wintergreen. I went to its old ground and found that, whilst there were still many plants in its most secluded nook, most were small and apparently far from happy. Moreover, the whole colony is in danger of being swallowed up by coarse grasses.—J.W.H.H.
- Cirsium heterophyllum** L. Melancholy Thistle. 66, 67  
At Brasside when the N.N.U were there in July and at Wylam on the riverside.

#### FUNGI

- Collybia ambusta** Fr. 66  
On charred ground, Redworth.—J.B.Nicolson

#### DIPTERA-FLIES

- Loewiola centaureae** F. Loew. 66  
Galling midribs of knapweed leaf, Winston.—J.B.Nicolson
- Rhabdophaga heterobia** H. Loew. 66  
Sparingly on *Salix* species near Birtley, but now extinct on Birtley Fell where the food plant *Salix repens* has been destroyed.—J.W.H.H.
- Perrisia angelicae** Rubs. 66  
On Angelica on railway bank sides near Birtley.—J.W.H.H.
- P. cardamines** Winn. 66  
Local and not very plentiful near Birtley; like many Cecidomyids it has become much rarer of late years.—J.W.H.H.
- Perrisia muricatae** Meade. 66  
Heavily galling plants of the sedge *Carex otrubae* at the Black Hall Rocks.—J.W.H.H.

#### LEPIDOPTERA – BUTTERFLIES AND MOTHS

- Macroglossum stellatarum** L. Humming-bird Hawk. 68  
This insect has been quite plentiful in my garden in June.
- Nemeophila plantaginis** L. Wood Tiger. 68  
I observed two Wood Tigers at the western end of Holy Island amongst the sand dunes on June 21st.—W. de L. Aitchison.
- Brenthis euphrosyne** L. 66  
A number on the wing on the site of felled woodland, Stuartfield Lodge Plantation, May 18th.—C. J. Gent



# THE VASCULUM (SUBSTITUTE)

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## BY THE WAY

Secretaries of Societies are requested to send us accounts of their summer and other activities as soon as possible for inclusion in our December number. Notes and records from our readers are welcome at any time, but should deal solely with natural history topics. In addition, they should be written in the usual form on one side of the paper only.

## CORNFIELD WEEDS

During the past season, we have devoted a considerable amount of time to an examination of cornfield weeds. Almost immediately the work began, it became very plain that the selection of weeds now growing in Durham cornfields differed very greatly from what one would have collected in the county forty years ago. Even the poppy populations, which one has grown to regard as inseparable from growing corn, display marked changes. Both the Common Red Poppy and the Smooth Long-headed Poppy have diminished greatly in numbers whilst the two smaller rough-headed species have disappeared completely. Of other species, very notable absentees now, at least in the Team Volley, are the Corncockle, the Night-flowering Catchfly, the Corn Marigold and the Corn Bluebottle. Amongst these the last two were displaying signs of vanishing at the end of the last century, but the other two were quite common. In their stead, there seems to have been an enormous increase in the amount of Red Shanks, Corn Spurreys, Speedwells, Sow-thistles and the like. In fact, the more showy weeds seem to have been displaced by others of less beauty and much more harmful powers.

Against the losses, the only interesting plant noted, and an addition to the flora of the counties, is the Bitter Candytuft.

In view of the interest of these changes, it is suggested that the field clubs might undertake a study of the cornfield populations

of their own area, and report the results, with any facts concerning the state of affairs for forty years, at the end of the season.

#### THE BLACKHALL ROCKS

Reports concerning what is to be done in the way of preserving many beautiful areas of our countryside for the enjoyment of the generations to come, have already been published. However, it is with very great regret that we learn that nothing seems to have been proposed to protect the rare plants and animals at the Blackhall Rocks, Co. Durham. This failure is the more disturbing when one realises the efforts made not only by our natural history societies and individual workers, but also by official bodies.

In order to determine how the position had been affected during the long war years, a pilgrimage was made to the Rocks in July, and the whole of the coastal stretch involved examined critically. The only disquieting feature noted was the fact that the shore itself was in a dreadful condition owing to the presence of coal debris. On the other hand, except for matters capable of speedy adjustment, the plants and insects, were in very good order.

In the last number of the *Vasculum* the state of the Bird's Eye Primrose and Round-leaved Wintergreen colonies was set out. Of these, the Bird's Eye Primrose could be saved quite simply by a cutting out of Cock's Foot grass. The Wintergreen, with many desirable plants like the Rockrose, the Saw-wort, the Marsh Helleborine and other orchids was in first-rate order. In particular, the strongest Marsh Helleborine colony which, so long as we have known it has never contained more than 21 plants, now rejoiced in no fewer than 143!

As for the insects, the Brown, or so called Castle Eden Argus, was swarming in great variety, even in gullies from which it had disappeared long ago; the same held true of the Least Minor, the Green Forester, the Burnets and the special race of the Common Blue.

Whilst it would be difficult to conserve the whole of the areas inhabited by the plants, to ensure the perpetuation of the insect colonies would cost but little. As the Brown Argus population supplies the best material in this country for studying the genetical problems resulting from the clashing and interbreeding of two distinct races, cannot a vigorous collective effort be made, even at this late date, to ensure that it is preserved?

#### BUTTERFLY AND MOTH IMMIGRANTS

In our July issue, a request was made for information concerning immigrant Lepidoptera in Durham and Northumberland, and to that appeal there has been some response, noted elsewhere in these pages. In spite of this we feel that our workers are not

doing their best in the endeavours now being made to place the study of such immigrants on a truly scientific basis. Many more records should have been forthcoming inasmuch as the influx of such insects has been accelerated greatly since June.

In most parts of our counties Clouded Yellow butterflies have appeared in unprecedented quantities, even exceeding those of the "peak" year, 1942, whilst Red Admirals, Painted Ladies, Hummingbird Hawks, Silver-striped Hawks and Silver Y's have occurred in greater or less abundance. Moreover, Mr. F. Wade, who is never found lacking when such appeals are made, has had the good fortune to observe a Monarch Butterfly in the area, a butterfly of which only two other examples have been reported for the whole country this season. In addition, observers just over the Tees have reported the presence of the Pale Clouded Yellow. In view of the latter fact, and considering that we have seen the same butterfly in the Isle of Coll., it seems almost certain that it was present this season in the two counties. Only one previous record for the Pale Clouded Yellow exists for our area; has no one seen it this summer?

MR. SETH CAMPBELL

It is with the greatest regret that we have to announce the death of Mr. Seth Campbell.

Seth Campbell was one of those self-taught naturalists who, through force of circumstances, are compelled, more or less to work alone, and his duties under the N.E.R. put him in that position. Thus not many of us got to know him really well, and to the younger generation he was completely unknown.

His interests were very wide for he collected insects of all groups although his favourite orders were the Coleoptera, and, to a less extent, the Lepidoptera. Besides this, he paid considerable attention to the study of birds and molluscs. In search of his favourites, he wandered far afield in our counties, aided by the "pass" provided by the railway company. Although his collecting was done primarily in our district, he made periodic visits to the New Forest and, on one occasion, to the Pyrenees. In addition, prior to taking up duties with the N.E.R., he had travelled widely in various countries.

It must not be supposed that Seth was a recluse. Far from it, he was a member of the Natural History Society, and played a great part in the work of the Entomological Section. Moreover, he was a foundation member of the Wallis Club, and he assisted in its progress and development. At its fortnightly meetings he could always be seen in his regular place, aiding in the discussions and bringing interesting specimens for exhibition. He rarely

missed an excursion of the Club where he displayed considerable zeal in instructing our junior members.

His collections contain a huge mass of material, much of it unnamed. In view of the fact that all insect orders are represented, it is to be hoped that it will fall into the hands of someone who will work it out, and make the results of his labours available to local workers.

Mr. Campbell, who was unmarried, lived with his sister during his later years in Jesmond, after having spent the best part of his life in Gateshead.

## THE SOCIETIES

### NORTHERN NATURALISTS' UNION

This year, by the kindness of Professor Wager and Dr. Valentine, the Autumn Meeting of the Union was held on Saturday, October 18th, in the Science Buildings at Durham, and, as usual, the attendance was good.

The President, Dr. W. A. Clark, took the chair, and after the usual preliminaries called us to rise to show our respect for our late member, Mr. Seth Campbell. After the election of several new members, Dr. Clark introduced Mr. J. B. Cragg, and called upon him to deliver his address on "Blowflies and Sheep". The lecturer began by pointing out the kind of relationship between the flies and sheep. Then he demonstrated how the eggs were laid on the wool and that the larvae as they hatched attacked the sheep's flesh. Moreover, he indicated that the whole of the infestation was cumulative. Indeed, so bad was it that the loss in this country reached a total value of a million pounds. He compared the conditions of blowfly "strike" here with those in Australia and told us, most surprisingly, that our attacks were worse than those in the Antipodes.

He described the introduction of D.D.T. dips and showed how superior they were, both in actual effect, and length of immunity secured, in comparison with old dips.

Next he detailed the species of flies responsible for the attacks and gave accounts of their life histories. In particular, he stressed the role of dead sheep as sources of continued infestation and then discussed the conditions favouring "strike". He explained how an attractant must be present, but that this, in itself, did not lead to ovipositing which needed ammonia, sulphur and other compounds.

The lecture was illustrated throughout with lantern slides, and details of the speaker's own very important experiments.

After an excellent discussion, and a well deserved vote of thanks we partook of tea; for arranging this our thanks are due to Miss W M. Lomas.

According to our usual custom, a series of exhibits had been prepared for inspection, amongst which Mr. Cragg's series of flies, illustrative of his lecture, must be singled out.

Dr. Valentine showed young plants of *Casuarina stricta*, reared from Australian seeds whilst his colleagues, Miss K. M. Chalklin and Dr. Crosby, had respectively on view prothalli of horsetails and ferns and a set of "scarlet" pimpernels resulting from various crosses between red and blue pimpernels.

Dr. K. B. Blackburn brought along Lake District specimens of *Rudbeckia laciniata* and *Impatiens noli-tangere* with other *Impatiens* species for comparison. In addition, she had pressed specimens of meadow rues of the *Thalictrum minus* group. Miss W. M. Lomas showed photographs illustrating further generations of her foxglove hybrids involving *Digitalis purpurea*, *D. amandiana* and *D. thapsi* whilst Professor Heslop Harrison displayed living plants of various Arctic species of the genus *Erigeron* for comparison with Rhum specimens of *E. uniflorus* and Clova *E. boreale*. He also brought a viviparous *Juncus bufonius* and several Birtley specimens of the Five-spot Burnet, *Zygaena lonicerae*, an insect recorded for Durham a hundred years ago.

#### DARLINGTON AND TEESDALE NATURALISTS' FIELD CLUB.

On May 17th, a party of 37 visited Rievaulx Abbey and Kirkdale under the leadership of Mr. T. N. Scaling. In Millbank Wood, the Columbines were still in bloom but the Lilies-of-the-Valley were coming into flower.

The All-Night Ramble on May 31st/June 1st, from Richmond via Aske and Hartforth to Gilling, was favoured with an unusually warm night, the temperature never falling below 56° F. The opening of the dawn chorus was heard on the moor, when Curlews, Larks and Cuckoos were accompanied by the bleating of the Snipe and the churring of the Nightjar.

A visit to Upper Teesdale was marred by continuous rain; and we were again unfortunate when a party of 36 travelled to Seahouses, only to find the sea too rough for the Farnes to be visited. But generally the weather favoured us notably so on our excursions to Blackhall Rocks, Easby Abbey, Mount Grace Priory, Dryderdale, Brasside Ponds, Forcett Quarries and Lartington Fish Ponds.

The Fungus Foray was held in Wynyard Park and was greatly enjoyed despite the scarcity of fungi after the prolonged drought. 36 species were identified.

The weekly indoor meetings during the summer were well supported. Members contributed notes of their observations on a wide variety of topics and brought along numerous interesting exhibits. Of these, reference must be made to a chick with four legs, almost fully formed, though it had failed to hatch.

## NOTES AND RECORDS

### NOTES

**Strange Behaviour of a Chaffinch.**—On April 3rd, 1947, at 9.46 a.m., my attention was drawn to a fine cock chaffinch trying to get into our dining room window where he was utilising the wireless lead-in as a perch. When I offered him a few crumbs, he flew down to my feet to eat them.

During the afternoon, whilst I was weeding in front of the window, the bird sat on a branch above my head, but continued to flutter against the window panes, pecking at them until 8.30 p.m.

Next morning, at 7 a.m., we could hear him again striking at the pane. As the curtains were drawn, he was unable to see inside. Thinking that the procedure would deter him, we removed all coloured objects from the window sill, but this was of no avail. I therefore drew the curtain, and opened the window when he looked into the room. Next, I closed the window from the bottom and opened the top half, whereupon he flew in, perched for a second or two, and then flew to the window again.

After a few days, this constant fluttering and perching got on our nerves, so we tried to frighten him away, firstly with a folded newspaper, and then with a table napkin, but even this failed to deter him. As the days passed, we got used to his visits, which lasted from dawn until dusk.

On April 20th, a hen bird put in an appearance, but she, instead of flying at the window, contented herself with perching on a nearby tree and watching the male. By this time, his visits were becoming less frequent for now the interval between two lasted half an hour. Two days later, we had a very high wind, and this also reduced the number of his daily visits. One further point observed at this stage was the fact that heavy rain did not bother him.

In May, he was still tapping as late as the 4th, but his visits were now hourly, and took place just after we awakened. On the 9th, we listened in vain for his early morning performance, but he had ceased his self-imposed task. His nesting duties were evidently occupying the whole of his time.

The number of taps on the window at each visit varied in general from four to seven, and the record was ten, which he carried out in flight, swinging like a pendulum to and from the glass. It was interesting to watch the other birds whilst the chaffinch was at the window; they evinced great curiosity.—W. J. Dixon.

**Early Brambles**—The first ripe blackberries of the year were seen on August 13th in a field near Pontop, Dipton.—J. J. McKinney.

**Bird Life near the Brasside Ponds.**—When the Northern Naturalists' Union held its July outing in the Brasside Ponds area, I made a number of interesting observations on the birds present. Amongst those noted were the Coot, Little Grebe, Golden Eye, Pochard, Mallard, Teal, Tufted Duck, Mute Swan, Black-headed Gull, Reed Bunting and Reed-warbler.—D. B. Blackburn.

**The Welsh Poppy on the Upper Derwent.**—On the 10th of June, 1947, a nice colony of the Welsh Poppy *Meconopsis cambrica* was discovered near the Derwent at the Sneap.—Margaret S. Dixon.

**A Visit to a Golden Eagle's Nest**—On June 16th, as we wished to determine the fate of the eagle's nest at Wreck Bay on the Isle of Rhum, we crossed the island to Harris, and thence set out on a weary tramp westward across bleak and desolate moors, perhaps the most forbidding in the whole island. Over them sweep, without a check, the fiercest of south-westerly gales from the Atlantic. Everywhere as we marched were encountered evidences, in the form of dead red deer, of the very severe winter of 1946-47. At one point, no fewer than five dead stags were found together.

About a mile from the Bay, we came across a hind with a newly-born fawn, probably not an hour old, not unnaturally, the hind scurried away. Taking advantage of the golden opportunity, we halted to photograph the beautiful little animal but, most unfortunately, made the mistake of handling it. As soon as we attempted to leave, it followed us wherever we went. At length, to get rid of it we had to run as fast as we could to a little stream, and then to turn sharply at right angles down to a hollow where the fawn was unable to see us. We left it with regret, for we felt that we had provided a meal for the eagles in the very near future.

On reaching the coast, we admired the massive cliffs, crowned by the ridge of the Sgorr Reidh, towering a sheer thousand feet above us. On these cliffs were strong growths of ivy, golden rod, carline thistles and the like. But what interested us most was our objective, a huge straggling nest of the golden eagle completely filling a cliff ledge, nearly three hundred feet above the foaming sea. This ledge formed the top of a bare stretch of perpendicular rock, seemingly about a dozen feet high, to which approach seemed possible by climbing up a kind of ramp.

At first, all three of us contented ourselves by selecting a vantage point on the top of one of the lower cliffs from which we could peer into the nest by means of a telescope. Scattered around us were relics of past meals, which proved only too conclusively the type of food provided for the eaglets by their parents; two fawns, only two or three days old, lay dismembered on the crags. Our telescope speedily revealed that the nest contained two young ones. In order to ascertain what food the young birds had eaten in addition to the fawns, one of our party decided to make an attempt to reach the nest by way of the ramp. Up and up he scrambled, until he looked like a fly on the cliff face. Finally, he came to the broken rocks at the base of the perpendicular buttress supporting the nest. Left and right he made gallant attempts to surmount it, until we dared look no longer; a single false step, and our friend would have crashed to the rocks hundreds of feet below. After trying for what seemed to us to be an interminable time to climb this last stretch, he gave up and began his descent. Every step had to be picked out with the greatest care, and every foothold tested. However, all difficulties were successfully overcome, and, with a feeling of intense thankfulness, we saw him climbing up the scree to reach us.

It will, no doubt, interest our readers to learn that no fewer than three pairs of golden eagles, with a possible fourth, successfully reared their young on the Isle of Rhum in 1947.

**Further Bird Notes.**—On June 9th, a pair of goldfinches was observed on the wall of the Drive leading to Blackhill station; these are the first I have seen in the immediate district. Later in the month, on the 28th, a spotted flycatcher's nest was seen in a willow tree, 8 yards from the back of the house, 33, Queen's Road, Blackhill, whilst a redpoll's nest was noted in an apple tree about the same distance from the front of the house. Considerably farther afield, I observed a little owl near Dunstanburgh Castle at 7.30 p.m. on August 14th.—Mr. J. Dixon.

## RECORDS

### BIRDS

**Podiceps cristatus cristatus** L. Great Crested Grebe. 66  
One on Hebburn Ponds on April 13th and again on April 16th.  
**Anas querquedula** L. Garganey. 66, 67  
A duck and a drake on Gosforth Park lake on April 19th; also a pair on Hebburn Ponds, May 9th to 12th.—C. J. Gent.

**Sterna macrura.** Arctic Tern.

66

One frequented Hebburn Ponds from April 24th till May 7th.—C.J.G.

LEPIDOPTERA—BUTTERFLIES AND MOTHS

**Colias croceus** Fourc. Clouded Yellow.

66, 67, 68

As has already been indicated, there has been an unprecedented influx of this insect into the British Isles this season. The following shows the distribution in our counties:-

Darlington area: One on June 19th, but plentiful from Sept. 2nd to Oct. 10th.—J. B. Nicholson.

Shildon: One in a field on August 5th.

Stanhope area: A female on Aug. 26th, two on the seventh.

Ryhope: August 31st, several; Sept. 1st, a single male.—T. W. Jefferson.

Muggleswick: Sept. 17th.

Rowland's Gill: Late August; Sept. 20th.

Allansford : Sept. 24th.—C. Hutchinson.

Birtley district: Plentiful from Sept. 3rd to Sept. 22nd.—J. W. Heslop Harrison.

Brasside: First, week in August.

Bellingham : August.—G. W. Temperley

**Vanessa atalanta** L. Red Admiral.

66, 67

**V. cardui** L. Painted Lady.

The former has been quite common everywhere in the two counties the second has been distributed generally, but thinly.—C. J. Gent, J. B. Nicholson, J. W. Heslop Harrison

**Macroglossa stellatarum** L. Hummingbird Hawk.

66

At Darlington, one on June 9th, but plentiful from Sept. 2nd to Oct. 10th.—J. B. Nicholson

Two or three at Birtley in June.—J.W.H.H.

**Vanessa io** L. Peacock.

66

At Bishop Auckland, Sept. 15th.—A. Ball.

**Horse convolvuli** L. Convolvulus Hawk.

66

One captured at Blackhill during the third week in September.—W. J. Dixon.

**Pieris brassicae** L. Large White.

66, 67

As the state of cabbage fields and patches bears witness, there has been a very strong invasion of this area by the Large Cabbage Whites. It made its first appearance on a large scale in June.—J.W.H.H.

**Perizoma alchemillata** L. Small Rivulet. L.

66

Larvae very plentiful during September, feeding on hemp nettle seed easily discovered by the presence of a seal of silk at the calyx mouth.

FLOWERING PLANTS

**Elatine hexandra** DC.

104

Found in Loch Papadil, Isle of Rhum; this provides the first record for vice county 104.—John Heslop Harrison.

**Campanula glomerata** L. Clustered Bellflower.

66

Two or three years ago I reported the occurrence of this interesting plant on the banks of a long-disused waggon way, northeast of Birtley. Dr. J. E. Hull has just informed me that he saw it in the same station sixty years ago.—J.W.H.H.



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## BY THE WAY

Up to the present date we have received no reports from Secretaries of our Societies for the closing months of the present year. In view of the importance of maintaining contacts by means of such reports, we trust that the deficiencies will be remedied in the very near future. Further, we should like to point out that they, as well as outstanding subscriptions for 1947, should be sent to Dr. K. B. Blackburn as soon as possible.

### THE VEGETATION OF CLAY PITS.

During the past few years, very remarkable changes have occurred in the vegetation of disused clay pit workings in the Team Valley, North Durham. In particular, the pits have been invaded by huge masses of orchids composed of the two species, Stephenson's Marsh Orchid (*Orchis purpurella*) and the Spotted Orchid (*O. fuchsii*). As a result, very strong colonies, involving tens of thousands of these forms, and of hybrid swarms of varying degrees of complexity, have been established. As the phenomenon is not restricted to one set of workings, but is observable in all throughout the Team Valley area, it would be interesting to investigate the state of affairs in similar habitats elsewhere in the two counties, more especially as the Union's visit to the Brasside Ponds in July revealed that that district was also affected. Other species which seem to be moving into similar localities in the Team Valley are the bulrush, the pondweed, *Potamogeton pusillus* and a very strange form of the brooklime.

We hope our Societies will interest themselves in the matter and send the results of their labours to us at the end of next season

#### THE GUISEERS' PLAY.

Just before the war, when a paper dealing with the folklore of Northumberland, Durham and Cumberland was being prepared for that interesting work "The Three Northern Counties of England", one of the points investigated was the old guisers' play current in the area until the beginning of the present century. Almost immediately the researches were commenced, it was realized with some dismay that, whilst scraps of Northumberland versions could be obtained, no traces of those formerly in use in South Durham were available. Fortunately, we ourselves were able to supply the whole of the text of the Team Valley play, and this duly appeared when the book was published.

At present, the position remains the same, and recently, when we received enquiries concerning the play, we were unable to add anything to the facts already published. Can any of our members provide us with their versions of this play, or with facts concerning it or its production? If possible, the material so supplied will be utilized in producing a paper for publication in our Transactions.

We need scarcely emphasize that the matter is urgent for, as is the case with most of our folklore and children's games, exact knowledge is passing away from us for ever.

#### MR. J. E. NOWERS.

We regret to inform our members that we have learnt that our old friend and member, Mr. J. E. Nowers, one of the founders of the Union, has died. A notice will appear in our next issue.

#### OBITUARY NOTICE.

##### CHARLES E. ROBSON.

On the 23rd of November 1947, at his home, "Priorsdale" Clayton Road, Newcastle, Charles E. Robson, Senior Honorary Secretary of the Natural History Society, passed quietly away at the advanced age of 91 years. To many generations of naturalists his death severs a link with the past, for he had known personally many earlier workers in the natural sciences who had been associated with the Natural History Society including John Hancock, W. J. Wingate, G. A. Lebour, Richard Howse, G. S. Brady and others whose names are revered by present day members, and had served under the Presidency of the First Lord Armstrong, the First Lord Joicey and Viscount Grey of Fallodon.

Mr. Robson joined the Society in 1943, when it was amalgamated with the Tyneside Naturalists' Field Club, of which he was already a member and officeholder. In 1904 he was appointed an Honorary Secretary, jointly with the late N. H. Martin, an

office which he held continuously until his death, a period of 43 years. During that time he guided the interests and policy of the Council with wisdom and experience, through good and evil days, including two world wars and several industrial depressions. The welfare of the Society always took first place in his thoughts, and it was largely through his personality that the members found their link with one another and with the Society. When the Society's finances required it, as they too often did, it was his zeal which attracted donations to the many Maintenance, Repairs and Publications Funds. As an organiser no detail escaped him, and it was due to him that the pre-war Conversazioni were so much enjoyed by members and their friends. At meetings he had the happy knack of saying just the right word, whether he were presiding at a lecture, proposing a vote of thanks or steering the Council through a crowded agenda.

He was not a trained naturalist, but he had a wide knowledge of the local fauna and flora, which was always at the disposal of his fellow members, and a field meeting under his guidance was an educational as well as a social event. During the years when it was possible to maintain the wildflower exhibit in the Museum, he was chiefly responsible for naming the plants displayed and very rarely was a specimen brought in that he could not identify at first sight.

Long convinced of the need for a closer cooperation between the educational work of King's College and the Society's Museum, Mr. Robson lived long enough to witness the Agreement between the two organisations which is bringing this about. In 1931 Durham University conferred upon him the degree of M.Sc., *honoris causa*, as an expression of appreciation of his long years of work in the cause of Natural History.

He died in harness, as he would have wished to do, for his last errand, only a few days before his death, was a visit to the Museum where he discussed with his colleague the future of the Society. He will long be remembered as an able Secretary, a staunch friend and a congenial colleague.

G.W.T.

“NATURAL HISTORY IN THE HIGHLANDS AND ISLANDS”, by F. FRASER DARLING, published by Collins, 16/-.

Very few authors could be more fitted than Dr. Fraser Darling to write this account of Natural History in the Highlands and Islands, No. 6 in the "New Naturalist Series". As a Director of the West Highland Survey and a member of the Scottish Committee on National Parks he has had unique opportunities of

studying the area he describes. His own researches into the social behaviour of gregarious animals in the Highlands and Western Isles, and his farming experiences on Tanera in the Summer Isles, have added further to his knowledge, and one cannot read any section of the present work without feeling that he writes from a deep love of this western land, its wild life, its people and its scenery. Above all, his book succeeds in the object expressed in his own preface, that of stimulating its readers to get out into the field again.

The scope of the book can best be seen from a study of the chapter headings which include such subjects as Geology and Climate, Relief and Scenery, the Deer Forest, Grouse Moor and Sheep Farm, the Woodlands, the Summits of the Hills, the Sea Shores, the Sub-oceanic Islands and the Lochs and Rivers. It would perhaps seem that there is some unbalance in the subject matter, for while comparatively little botanical or entomological material is included, two whole chapters are devoted to the life histories of the Red Deer and the Atlantic Grey Seal. These two chapters, however, are amongst the most interesting in the book, for they are largely the results of Dr. Darling's own researches and observations and make fascinating reading. Of more than usual interest are his descriptions of the habits of the Grey Seal on North Rona and the Treshnish Islands. A third chapter of great interest on account of its unusual subject matter is that on the Human Factor, and the truly remarkable changes in the animal population of the Highlands and Islands in historic times.

Dr. Darling explains in his preface why he refused to call his book "The Natural History of the Highlands and Islands" and elsewhere expresses his regret that it is impossible for one man to compass the whole natural history of a region. One sympathises with the difficulties of the author of such a survey as this. At the same time one feels that a wider knowledge of some of the recent literature, in particular, the many regional floras of the Inner and Outer Isles, compiled by members of the King's College Biological Expeditions to the Hebrides, would have helped him in his discussions of the floras and fauna's of these areas, and would have prevented him making at least one rather serious misstatement. For instance, on P.43, Dr. Darling writes that "the island or Rum (sic!) is, for the most part, a closed book to naturalists. We may hope that this unfortunate period of its history is drawing to a close". Actually, the reverse is the case, for through the kindness and most sympathetic interest of Lady Bullough and the late Sir George Bullough, it has been possible for more than a dozen visits to be paid to the island by members of King's College staff and students. These visits have resulted

in the publication of a Flora of the Island (with various supplements) and of entomological and geological papers, so that from the point of view of its natural history, Rhum is one of the best known of the Hebridean islands. Incidentally, though there are red deer, wild goats and ponies on Rhum, Dr. Darling's wild cats have yet to be seen! Furthermore, in a discussion of the flora of the "suboceanic" islands, (defined as small islands washed by uninterrupted ocean seas, in the area under survey, and in general uninhabited by man) Dr. Darling states that the University expeditions from Edinburgh, Glasgow and Durham "have not studied the small oceanic islands with which we are specifically dealing". In his list of such islands he includes Berneray and the Monach Isles, yet both of these islands, together with Mingulay and Pabbay (Harris) which by Darling's definition must also be considered "suboceanic" have been worked by members of the King's College team, and floras have been published and discussed. Darling speaks of "the phenomenon of the paucity of species" on these small islands yet 123 spp. of flowering plants were recorded from Berneray, 197 from Mingulay and 132 from the Monach Isles. One misses too, a reference to Dr. Turrill's Flora of St. Kilda (1927) which not only lists the 140 odd plants recorded for this island but gives a valuable botanical biography of the island.

On pages 36 and 38 the names of the mosses *Myurium hebridarum* and *Eurhynchium myosuroides* are wrongly spelt, mistakes which are repeated in the index. Misleading too, is the statement on page 36 concerning the distribution of *Myurium*. This does not occur in south-west Britain, but is confined to certain stations in the Hebrides and one on the adjacent Scottish mainland.

Dr. Darling's book is freely illustrated by diagrams, distributional maps and by many beautiful photographs in black and white and in colour. Many of the latter are the work of the author himself. Unlike the illustrations in many books of this nature, the photographs are not merely attractive pictures, but all are valuable additions to the text.

In conclusion, I have pleasure in heartily recommending Dr. Fraser Darling's book which is a more than worthy member of the New Naturalist Series. It will be read with much enjoyment by many nature lovers, whether interested in the wild life of the Highlands and Islands or of their own corner of Britain. I would like to draw the attention of these readers to Dr. Darling's final paragraph in which he indicates what should surely be the attitude of all of us to the study of natural history.

H.H.C.

## NOTES AND RECORDS

### NOTES

**The Clouded Yellow (*Colias croceus*) in Northumberland and Durham in 1947.**—This butterfly was regularly seen at Riding Mill between August 20th and October 3rd, 1947. Those taken in August were quite fresh, suggesting they may not have travelled any great distance but had been bred in the vicinity.—F. W. Gardner.

In 1947 about thirty specimens of the Clouded Yellow were observed between August 12th and September 25th amongst them being one example of the female variety *helice*. Most of them were seen in a potato field overrun with charlock. They occurred in the Barnard Castle district on both sides of the River Tees.—J. P. Robson!

**A Piebald Sparrow in the Birtley Area.**—On July 20th, as I was looking for the Toadflax Pug on the slag tip at Birtley, a sparrow, beautifully blotched with white patches, alighted on a nearby fence and gave me a splendid opportunity for examining it closely.—J.W.H.H.

**A Late Example of the Garden Tiger Moth (*Arctia caja*).**—On October 19th, as I was walking up the Fell Bank at Birtley, I was greatly surprised to note a fine example of the Tiger Moth on a garden fence. It was boxed and taken home where inspection showed that it was a female and newly emerged, as the excretion of the usual pinkish fluid demonstrated. After a few days, it deposited several large batches of eggs, all of which proved unfertile and collapsed. During the same day, quite a number of well grown larvae of the same species were observed feeding on bramble and other leaves. As these were well past their normal hibernation instar, it seems probable that the species will be in "short supply" locally next season.

**The Abundance of Dragonflies in North Durham during the Past Season.**—The season opened late for these insects in this district, and comparatively few of the smaller fry were seen in May and June. Later, however, in July, *Aeshna juncea* put in an appearance in numbers far beyond what I have seen in former years. *Cordulegaster boltoni* likewise, was very far from rare. In September, even these abnormal numbers were surpassed by the two *Sympetra*, *S. striolatum* and *S. danae*. Pairs were observed on practically every stretch of water, great and small, and, occasionally, very far from any water at all. With the *S. striolatum* flew a certain number of specimens showing varying degrees of transition to the Pleistocene race *nigrofemur*. Clearly, our district provides stations in which the ordinary English race and *nigrofemur* interbreed. Thus we have a case parallel to the interbreeding of the ordinary English race of the Brown Argus butterfly (*Aricia agestis*) and its Scottish race *artaxerxes*.—J.W.H.H.

**The Rose Pea Gall on Hybrid Roses.**—For several years experiments have been proceeding with various hybrids between local species of wild roses. As a result, there are growing in the garden hybrids of varying degrees of complexity amongst which are first generation crosses between *Rosa spinosissima* and *R. mollis* var. *fallax*, and second generation lots of *Rosa dumetorum* x *R. mollis*. Last year, for the first time there appeared in the garden, on examples of pure *R. spinosissima*, galls of the Cynipid, *Rhodites eglanteriae*. As this species is quite rare in the Team Valley, and as the known colonies occur a considerable distance from the garden, the advent of the Cynipid was, in itself, an occurrence provoking much thought. However, the abandoning of the Burnet Rose in favour of *mollis* hybrids seemed equally surprising until one realized all the known

wild colonies of *Rhodites eglanteriae* near Birtley were attached to *Rosa mollis*. What really seems inexplicable is the selection of *Rosa spinosissima* as host plant when the *Rhodites* first invaded the garden.—J.W.H.H.

**The Variation of the Spring Usher Moth near Barnard Castle.**— In my earlier papers, published in the *Vasculum* in 1927 and 1928, I recorded the Spring Usher (*Erannis leucophaearia*) as common in this district. Now I can report it as not only very common, but also as showing a remarkable range of variation. All forms, from those presenting a very pale appearance, through heavily marked specimens to others quite black, may be captured. Amongst the named forms collected were such melanic varieties as ab. *marmorinaria* and ab. *merularia*.—J. P. Robson.

**The Autumnal Moths, *Oporinia christyi* and *O. autumnata*, in the Barnard Castle Area.**— The former species, first recorded for Durham only a few years ago, has now proved to be a far from rare insect, both in Durham and Yorkshire, near Barnard Castle. Whilst it is attached in some of its stations to the usual wych elm, in others it depends upon alder as its food plant just as the late J.E.R. Allen proved it to be the case in Co. Fermanagh, N. Ireland. Its ally, *O. autumnata*, has also been detected in both counties in a restricted locality, also amongst alder. In fact, the insect has been beaten from the same trees as produced *O. christyi*.—J. P. Robson.

## RECORDS

### FLOWERING PLANTS

- Primula variabilis* Goup'. (*Primula vulgaris* x *P. veris*).** 66  
This year, in a field near South Road, Durham, two plants were growing very near *P. vulgaris*, whilst last year the hybrid plants were found close to the cowslip parents, which formed a colony some way off.—A.N.G.
- Polygonum bistorta* L. Bistort.** 66  
A large patch was seen flowering by the side of a road near Brancepeth in June.—A.N.G.
- Doronicum pardalianches* L. Great Leopard's Bane.** 66  
At Croxdale among vegetation springing up near felled tree stumps.—A.N.G.
- Lycopus europaeus* L. Gipsywort.** 66  
A fine clump by the Wear opposite Durham Cathedral.—A.N.G.
- Euphorbia peplus* L. Spurge.** 66  
Plentiful as a weed on waste ground near Helmington Row.—J.W.H.H.
- Centaurea scabiosa* L.**  
On railway bank sides near Brown's Buildings; this occurrence gives some indications of the method of spread and origin of the plants noticed recently in North Durham.—J.W.H.H.

### HOMOPTERA.

- Fonscolombia fraxini* Newst.** 66  
This somewhat local scale insect occurred not uncommonly on ash trees by the road side at Helmington Row, Mid-Durham.—J.W.H.H.

### ODONATA—DRAGONFLIES

- Cordulegaster boltonii* Don.** 66  
On June 29th a single specimen was seen flying strongly near the Hisehope Burn at Gold Bridge.—A.N.G.

## LEPIDOPTERA—BUTTERFLIES AND MOTHS

- Argynnis aglaia** L. Dark Green Fritillary. 67  
This species turned up in some numbers in the garden at Riding Mill towards the end of August; they seemed to delight in jostling the Red Admirals from the Buddleias.—F. W. Gardner.
- Nymphalis io** L. Peacock. 66, 67  
Several noted in August and also a few in May at Riding Mill.—F.W.G.  
Since my earlier records of this species, only two further examples have been seen at Barnard Castle, one in August 1936 and the other in September 1942.—J. P. Robson.
- Vanessa cardui** L. Painted Lady. 67  
Much commoner in 1947 than I have known it previously in Northumberland. It was first seen on June 28th and last on October 20th. Of the flowers visited, valerian seem to attract it more particularly.—F.W.G.
- Macroglossum stellatarum** L. Hummingbird Hawk. 67  
Very plentiful in the spring and again in September.—F.W.G.
- Agrotis ipsilon** Rott. Dark Swordgrass. 67  
An immigrant species and of common occurrence during 1947 at Riding Mill.—F.W.G.
- Peridroma porphyrea** Schiff. Pearly Underwing. 67  
Another immigrant species found commonly at Riding Mill this season; larvae were noted feeding on Nicotiana.—F.W.G.
- Hadena lepida** Esp. Tawny Shears. 67  
Captured for the first time at Riding Mill this season.—F.W.G.
- Omphaloscelis lunosa** Hw. Lunar Underwing. 67  
Also new to the Riding Mill list in 1947.—F.W.G.
- Aporophylla nigra** Hw. Black Rustic. 67  
Two at light on September 10th.—F.W.G.
- Plusia festucae** L. Gold Spot. 67  
Although there was a remarkable absence of all Plusias in July, there was a second emergence of this species in September at Riding Mill.—F.W.G..
- Nyctosia obstipata** Fab. The Gem. 67  
A specimen came to light in late October, 1947, at Riding Mill.—F.W.G.
- Cryphea perla** L. Marbled Beauty. 66, 67  
For many years this species has escaped observation in Durham, but recently it has been captured on many walls near Birtley and Chester-le-Street. My friend, the late Mr. J. R. Johnson, used to tell me that he took it in the "eighties" of the last century on the wall bounding Saltwell Park, Low Fell, Gateshead, but that it had vanished in a very short time after its detection. This year, I took it at Low Fell on the wall on the east side of the main road near the tram terminus. I have also seen it in some numbers on the railway bridge at Hexham.—J.W.H.H.
- Leucania conigera** F. 66  
Not noted by me at Birtley for over forty five years; taken on the slag tip in July.—J.W.H.H.
- Procris statices** L. The Forester. 66  
Two captured at Barnard Castle in July 1946.—J. P. Robson.
- Nola confusalis** HS. Least Black Arches. 66  
Of this species I took two examples at Barnard Castle in June 1946.—J.P.R.
- Orthosia munda** Esp. Twin-spotted Quaker. 66  
Bred from pupae taken at the bases of oak trees on several occasions.—J.P.R.